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FM REO KIRKUK
TO RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD IMMEDIATE 0497
RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0534
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE
RUEHKUK/REO KIRKUK 0561

C O N F I D E N T I A L KIRKUK 000045

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BAGHDAD FOR POL, POLMIL, RSO, ORA, NCT

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TAGS: [PINS](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [KISL](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: (C) SAMARRA UPDATE, 1900 2-23-06

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REASON: 1.4 (b), (d)

¶11. (U) This is a SET Tikrit cable.

¶12. (C) SUMMARY. Mostly peaceful protests occurred in Samarra on the first day after the Golden Mosque was bombed. The entire province was calm. END SUMMARY.

¶13. (C) At approximately 9:20 AM, the Iraqi Police (IP) guarding the ruins of the Golden Mosque opened the gates and let the crowd of less than 100 bystanders into the walled area. The crowd appeared to be calm, many were moving rubble from the open areas to clear a walk way, others appeared to be taking souvenirs from the bricks. As the day went on, at least 1,000 people walked around the streets near the mosques. Although the IP did arrest a few walkers, no violence was seen. By evening, the number of people around the Mosque had dropped below 100 again.

¶14. (U) The bodies of three news people, abducted on 22 February, from Samarra, were found about 10 miles North of Samarra. The fourth member of the news team escaped, and made his way to Tikrit, where he was aided and questioned by police (NFI).

¶15. (U) In Tozhurkato, a peaceful demonstration with men armed with AK-47's lasted about 2 hours. In Ad Dujail, 150-200 people protested peacefully.

COMMENT

¶16. (C) The situation in Salah ad Din Province is very calm. Sunni Arabs are not getting involved in violence, and Shia Arabs seem to be following Al Sistani's demand to protest peacefully.

ORESTE